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U.S. TO LET UKRAINE USE LANDMINES AGAINST ADVANCING RUSSIAN FORCES

President Joe Biden will allow Ukraine to use US-supplied anti-personnel landmines to help it slow down Russia's battlefield progress

THEY POSE LESS RISK TO CIVILIANS: AUSTIN

US Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin said the US will supply non-persistent landmines that become unable to detonate over time. "We can control when they would self-activate... and that makes them far more safer eventually," he said. Anti-personnel land mines have long been criticised because they present a lingering threat to civilians

U.S. EMBASSY SHUT AMID RUSSIAN ATTACK FEAR

- The latest policy shift comes days after Biden allowed Ukraine to use US-supplied long-range missiles to strike inside Russia
- The US Embassy in Kyiv shut its doors on Wednesday after receiving a warning of a significant Russian attack on the city in response to Biden's decision on Ukraine's use of long-range missiles | P12

1.74L sq km

OF UKRAINIAN LAND IS INFESTED WITH LANDMINES AS PER AN ESTIMATE

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TIRUCHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

● Exit polls forecast close fight in Jharkhand with narrow edge for BJP ● No exit poll sees MVA win in Maharashtra

POLLSTERS GIVE MAHA ADVANTAGE TO NDA

PREETHA NAIR @ New Delhi

AS the high stakes Assembly polls in Maharashtra and Jharkhand came to a close on Wednesday, several pollsters gave the BJP-led alliance a clear edge in Maharashtra and a close fight in Jharkhand.

An aggregate of exit polls projected that the ruling NDA may retain power in Maharashtra while four of the eight pollsters projected an NDA win in Jharkhand.

Counting of votes will take place on November 23 Saturday for the single-phase Maharashtra election held on Wednesday and the two-phase voting in Jharkhand held on November 13 and 20. While the Matrize exit poll gave 150-170 seats for the BJP-led Mahayuti alliance in Maharashtra with a 48% vote share, it gave the MVA allies only 110-130 seats with a vote share of 42%. The pollster gave others 8 to 10 seats, with a vote share of 10%.

In the 288-member Maharashtra Assembly, the BJP is contesting in 149 seats, Eknath Shinde's Shiv Sena 81 and Ajit Pawar's Nationalist Congress party 59. To retain power, the Mahayuti will need 145 seats to reach the majority mark. The exit poll conducted by Peoples Pulse gave Mahayuti 175-195 seats; it showed that MVA will secure only 85-112 seats and 7-12 to others in Maharashtra. In the MVA alliance, the Congress has contested in 101 seats, Uddhav Thackarey's Shiv Sena (UBT) 95 and Sharad Pawar's NCP 86 seats.

The high-pitched campaign in the state has seen the opposition and the ruling BJP locking horns over the latter's slogans *batenge to katenge* and *ek hai toh safe hai* on religious lines. While the ruling Mahayuti centred its campaign around its flagship schemes for women, the MVA focused on the government's failure to address farmer's distress, inflation, and reservation among others.

In Jharkhand, Matrize predicted 42-47 seats for the NDA and 25-30 seats for the Congress-JMM alliance. It gave 0-4 seats to others. Axis MyIndia and Electoral Edge predicted victory for the INDIA bloc. Dainik Bhaskar and P Marq have predicted a hung House.



DECIDE

First-time voters after casting votes at a polling station in Nagpur on Wednesday | PTI

MAHARASHTRA SEATS 288, TARGET 145

Source	NDA	MVA	OTH
Chanakya Strategies	152-160	130-138	6-8
Dainik Bhaskar	125-140	135-150	20-25
Electoral Edge	118	150	20
Lokshahi Marathi-Rudra	128-142	125-140	18-23
Matrize	150-170	110-130	8-10
P-Marq	137-157	126-146	2-8
Peoples Pulse	175-195	85-112	7-12
Poll Diary	122-186	69-121	10-27
Times Now-JVC	150-167	107-125	13-14
Poll of exit polls	**150**	**125**	**13**

JHARKHAND SEATS 81, TARGET 41

Source	NDA	INDIA	OTH
Axis My India	17-27	49-59	1-6
Chanakya Strategies	45-50	35-38	3-5
Dainik Bhaskar	37-40	36-39	0-2
Electoral Edge	32	42	7
Matrize	42-47	25-30	1-4
P-Marq	31-40	37-47	1-6
Peoples Pulse	44-53	25-37	5-9
Times Now-JVC	40-44	30-40	1-1
Poll of exit polls	**39**	**38**	**4**

65%

Voter turnout in Maharashtra as per latest available data. Only 52.07% voted in Mumbai

68%

Jharkhand voter turnout better than that in 2019. Maoist threat didn't deter voters

1,185

Polling booths in high-rises in Maharashtra, but not many urban voters turned up

Brisk polling in Jharkhand, Maharashtra

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Mumbai/Ranchi

THE high-voltage campaign in Maharashtra seemed to have enthused more voters to come out and exercise their franchise as the data released late in the night showed 64.72% turnout against 61.74% recorded in the 2019 Assembly elections. Jharkhand witnessed even higher polling at 68%, surpassing 67.04% polled last time.

Voting was largely peaceful in both states. In Maharashtra, the highest polling was recorded in Gadchiroli at 73.68% while Jharkhand's Jamtara district topped the charts with 76.16% turnout. The turnout was slightly better in urban centres in Maharashtra compared to previous polls, but it remained much lower than the state average.

In Jharkhand, Bokaro district recorded the lowest polling at 60.97%. All 288 seats in Maharashtra went to polls on Wednesday in a single phase. Jharkhand voted for 38 seats in the second and final phase. The first phase of polling in Jharkhand was held on November 13 for 43 seats, registering 64.86% turnout. P10

We make rocket sensors, can make for cars too: ISRO chief

BOSKY KHANNA @ Bengaluru

INDIAN Space Research Organisation (ISRO) Chairman S Somanath on Wednesday highlighted a contradiction in India's manufacturing industry, that while sensors used in rockets and spacecraft are made in India, automotive sensors are imported. He stated the need to manufacture car sensors in India, instead of relying on imports.

Speaking at the session on space technology and defence on the second day of the three-day Bengaluru Tech Summit, Somanath said, "Most sensors and sensor systems in cars and automobiles are imported, with nothing 'Made-in-India'. It is possible to use space-based sensors domestically, potentially at lower cost, to serve this sector."

Somanath emphasised that the reason why automotive sensors are imported but rocket sensors are made in India is because of the nature of engineering. "While space sensors made in India are of high quality, they are expensive. We need industry collaboration to produce sensors in large volumes in India to serve the sector," he said.

The ISRO chief pointed out that the pandemic showed that even availability of sensors can choke the product line of automobiles. P2



IT/BT Minister Priyank Kharge felicitates ISRO Chairman S Somanath during BTS 2024 in Bengaluru on Wednesday | NAGARAJA GADEKAL

Govt unveils draft Karnataka Space Tech Policy

The Karnataka government on Wednesday released the draft of the Karnataka Space Technology Policy 2024-29, aiming to position the state as a global destination for space technology. The policy was launched by IT/BT Minister Priyank Kharge and ISRO Chairman S Somanath, on the second day of the Bengaluru Tech Summit. P2



ADIOS, RAFA

Spanish tennis legend and 22-time Grand Slam winner Rafael Nadal bids adieu to the sport as he lost in the singles tie against Netherlands in the Davis Cup | AFP | P11

'Hair dryer' shipped to neighbour bursts, woman loses fingers

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bagalkot

RECEIVING a parcel containing a hair dryer proved painfully costly for the widow of a deceased soldier in Ilkal city of Bagalkot district on Wednesday. Basamma Yaranal, the wife of Papanna, a soldier who was killed in a short-circuit accident in Jammu and Kashmir in 2017, ended up grievously injuring her fingers, forearms amd face after the hair dryer exploded in her hands. Basamma had received a courier addressed to a neighbour, Shashikala, the widow of another deceased soldier. The parcel also bore Shashikala's name and mobile number. However, since she was out of town when it arrived, Shashikala requested Basamma to receive it on her behalf and check its contents.

Basamma did as requested, and opened the parcel to find a hair dryer inside. She then tried to demonstrate the device in front of other neighbours by switching it on, when it suddenly exploded with a loud bang, resulting in Basamma losing nine of her fingers, while also severely wounding her forearms and face. P3

FIRST FULL DRAFT ON CLIMATE FINANCE TODAY

WITH the clock ticking at COP29 in Azerbaijan, negotiators remain locked in intense discussions over the New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) on climate finance, struggling to resolve disputes over the scale and structure of support needed to aid vulnerable nations in their fight against climate change.



S V KRISHNA CHAITANYA
EXPRESS IN BAKU

Developing countries are demanding $1.3 trillion annually to address loss and damage, adapt to climate impacts, and transition to clean energy systems. However, developed nations have so far offered proposals falling significantly short of this figure.

The host presidency has promised to release the first full draft text on Thursday morning, but immediately clarified that it was not the final text but aiming to provide a starting point for resolution. Lead negotiator Yelchin Rafiyev expressed cautious optimism, describing the draft as a "clear step forward," though substantial decisions remain unresolved.

"There are still issues where all parties need to keep working to find a common ground and deliver a balanced outcome. I want to clarify that this text is not final. Based on the inputs from the parties, there would be elements in the final text which are not there in the draft," he said and added that decisions taken in Baku will be essential to guide us from the first to the second decade of the Paris Agreement. CONTINUED ON: P12

COP29

EXPRESS READ

Unidentified person questions min's Kannada fluency during video con

BENGALURU: During a video conference with PU students on Wednesday, an unidentified person questioned Education Minister Madhu Bangarappa's fluency in Kannada. Though the individual is believed to be a student, it remains unclear. The minister has sought that action be taken against the person. P3

GoRuCha to preside over Kannada Sahitya Sammelana in Mandya

BENGALURU: Kannada writer, folk scholar and freedom fighter Go Ru Channabasappa has been selected to preside over the 87th Kannada Sahitya Sammelana in Mandya from December 20-22. Popularly known as GoRuCha, the 94-year-old had served as Kannada Sahitya Parishat president between 1992 and 1995. P4

IIM-B students want director out, allege discrimination

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

PROTESTERS gathered in large numbers at Freedom Park on Wednesday, demanding swift action over allegations of caste discrimination at the Indian Institute of Management Bangalore (IIM-B).

Organised by the All India OBC Students Association (AIOBCSA), Dr BR Ambedkar Association of Engineers (BANAE), and OBC Federation of India, the protesters demanded the resignation of IIM-B Director Professor Rishikesha T Krishnan, accusing him of violating reservation policies and neglecting diversity and inclusion on campus.

They also criticised the institution for failing to uphold constitutional mandates on equity and inclusion.

Sikha M, a protester, told *The New Indian Express* that RTI findings show a glaring lack of representation at Indian Institute of Management Bangalore. P3

> The institute encourages feedback within its service rules, welcoming constructive input to further enhance inclusivity
> - IIM-B

